

VERMONT
Workforce Development Council
Executive Committee
Monday, May 22

NOTES

Next meeting - Monday, June 12 @ 2:30 VDOL

Recommendations to Gov. Douglas for Chair: Rick reported that the Governor had supported both the names that the Council had proposed as Chair. Rick will contact them to discuss their interest.

Recommendations for HRIC Membership: The list was reviewed and it was agreed that we should send all the names to the Governor with the suggestion that he appoint more than the minimum required business/employer members. We have a number of interested individuals and there is always attrition. Two additional potential members were added to the list. Chip will contact these to determine their interest and report back.

Review of Council Legislation: The re-authorization of the Council (H-109) has passed the Legislature with the language recommended by the Executive Committee. It is expected to be signed by the Governor within two weeks. Related Legislation: The Vermont Economic Progress Council Legislation was significantly altered with a new tax incentive program and the assignment of VEPC's long range planning function to a new committee that will be formed over the summer. It was agreed that the HRIC should contact this committee as soon as it is formed to discuss the workforce implications. The promise scholarships did not pass as originally proposed, however five million was set aside for scholarships and a committee was empowered to look at longer term funding strategies. Chip will prepare a "Thank You" for Rep. Keenan and Senator Illuzzi. S-222 also passed this year. It allows the Statewide Learning Works system to be reimbursed from the Education Fund for services that assist youth between 16 and 22 to achieve their high school completion credentials. The Council was actively involved in the creation of the single statewide contract for these services that was implemented by the State Board of Education in 2005. The increased accountability that this change provided contributed to the success of S-222.

Recognition of Commissioner McDonald: As this was Pat's last meeting, the Chair and members thanked her for her work and assistance to the Council over the past two years.

Executive Director Performance Review: Rick indicated that he was planning to complete Chip's performance review, and asked committee member if they would review his draft and make suggestions or comments. The Committee agreed. Chip suggested that the Council use the new job description which although it was not in place until last month, provided a better template for the job, and will therefore be more useful.

Review of the lost of Sector Criteria: The most recent draft was discussed and it was agreed that we should develop a 1 - 5 rating scale for each item. However when rating an individual sector it was suggested that we also choose a multiplier or weighted value for each criteria for use in evaluating that sector. Chip will prepare a draft.

NGA Sector Project: Chip provided a summary of the meeting he attended with the National Governor's Association. The NGA has a grant from several major foundations to assist a selected number of States to look at the workforce needs in economic sectors that the States would like to concentrate on from a workforce perspective. This might be any sector such as manufacturing, construction, healthcare, or some as yet unidentified emerging sector, or a more narrow subset of a sector. We can apply to be part of this project.

Sector-based workforce development strategies are being used successfully by a number of leading States including MA, Iowa, PA, Michigan and others. This is an approach that can be very effective, and I believe it is a very good fit with the Governor's Jobs strategy.

If VT is selected we would be invited to several out-of-state events (all expenses paid) to receive technical assistance and to work with other leading States to develop strategies for meeting the workforce needs of whatever economic sectors we choose. This would include strategies to make better and more targeted use of Federal funds that Vermont already receives. Down the road, the selected States will be in a good position to seek funding from USDOL and foundations to further advance this work.

Back in December Vermont put together an application for the WIRED project, a large workforce education and training proposal to USDOL that involved the HRIC, VDOL, DED, Champlain College and others. We did not win this grant, however several States that did win were working with the NGA and its partner organizations on these sector strategies.

The NGA views this as a project that brings workforce development and economic development together to support long-term growth, and therefore, we would want to have a small team representing education, workforce development and economic development, and of course, since this is organized by the NGA, they want to see that the Governor supports the initiative.

It was agreed that Chip should contact the appropriate agencies and the Governor's office and schedule a meeting to discuss Vermont's interest, and if there is agreement to begin to prepare an application.

Finalize the Vision: The Vision was reviewed and few edits were made. It was agreed that this is the final draft, however Chip suggested that is Mike Quinn could not attend today he be asked to give it a final review before we consider it finished. Chip will contact Mike. A copy as sent to a Mike is pasted in below.

Strategic Vision

DRAFT 4/21/06

Vermont's long-term economic vitality now hinges on our ability to effectively link our economic development strategies to our workforce development resources. We must build a comprehensive and integrated system with the goal of creating and enhancing Vermont's economy and providing our citizens with high-wage, knowledge-based jobs.

Challenges to Vermont's economic security:

- 1) A growing worker shortage.
- 2) A skills gap between the increasing requirements of many jobs and worker skills.
- 3) The lack of a comprehensive partnership between employers and education and training providers.
- 4) Limited growth of high wage jobs because of an inadequate supply of skilled workers.

To address these challenges, Vermont must strengthen its commitment to workforce development and lifelong learning for all businesses and workers. This system must foster innovation, create entrepreneurs, attract new workers, re-train aging workers, and retain our youth.

Workforce Development Council (HRIC) Strategies:

- 1) Engage employers as active partners in; developing and sustaining innovative workforce training programs, outreach efforts to students and displaced workers, and developing career paths that support the growth of high wage industries.
- 2) Engage education and training providers in responding to the needs identified in the Governor's Strategic Plan for job creation, retention, recruitment, and entrepreneurship.
- 3) Focus workforce development efforts on sectors where a skilled workforce is critical, including the Governor's five "Centers of Innovation": Information Technology, Environmental Technologies, Agricultural/Food Science, Life Sciences, and Advanced Manufacturing.

The success of these strategies depends on collaboration between private employers and the public agencies and institutions represented on the Workforce Development Council (HRIC).

'06 Action Steps:

As directed by the Governor, utilize the Workforce Development Council (HRIC) as the primary organization for communication of the workforce needs of business. By working closely with the Business Roundtable, State and local Chambers of Commerce, statewide business/trade associations, local WIBs, the Department of Economic Development and its statewide network, the State Board of Education, leading educational groups, the Governor's Interagency Workforce Development Committee, the Apprenticeship Council, the Vermont State Colleges and other postsecondary institutions, the HRIC will create opportunities for success.

The Council will:

- a) Work with the stakeholders at State and regional levels to assure a congruent set of policies is in place that supports and maximizes the effectiveness of workforce development efforts.
- b) Utilize economic, demographic, and labor market data and information to establish priorities.
- c) Advise the Governor and Legislature on policies, regulations, and laws that effect the development of a highly skilled workforce .
- h) Lead and monitor progress on system development, implementation, and results.

Specific Objectives:

To be developed

Operational Concepts:

- a) Sector Needs: Collaborate with employers to identify and address the near-term needs of sectors that are experiencing workforce shortages. Initiate one or more sector-based workforce development assessments each year with a focus on measurable results. This would include improving WIB capacity to detect and respond to regional workforce shortages and utilizing the "aggregation of need" strategy to help providers reach critical mass.
Examples: the HRIC's Health Care Workforce Taskforce that addressed shortages in essential healthcare occupations, or the Rutland WIB's assessment of skill needs in manufacturing and subsequent training program.
- b) Systemic Interventions: Implement system-wide strategies that can produce significant results over a longer term.
Examples: expanding work-based learning opportunities, increasing awareness of career opportunities, or promoting SCANS as a system-wide strategy to measure workforce readiness skills.

c) Structural Reforms: Communicate the need for specific changes in law, regulations, funding mechanisms, governance or agency/institution policy that are necessary to achieve improved performance.

Examples: the revised funding formula for sending-school tuition reimbursements to regional technical centers, the single statewide contract for adult literacy programs, or the need changes to child labor regulations or liability laws to enable expansion of work-based learning programs.

d) Measuring Performance: Use data to support decision-making and to demonstrate the success of the Council's work. A set of "dashboard indicators" will be developed that would document the effectiveness of the strategies described above.

Examples: increased wages, increased jobs, reduction in employer reported skill shortages